The Historical Novel, Ideology and Re-organization of the Semiosphere: the Case of the Slovene Historical Novel

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Abstract This essay intends to present some characteristic changes, i. e. , the inventions of motifs (referring to some new materials) and inventions in narrative strategies in the genre of the historical novel in the case of the Slovene historical novel, i. e. , the historical novel written in the Slovene language and referring to the Slovene historical-cultural context, at the beginning of the 21st century, or more precisely, after 1990, when the Slovene cultural community, self-identified as a national community, gained state-political emancipation. These new political-historical conditions, as well as the agent of post-structuralist thought, strengthened the tendency to multiply the historical imagination and the concepts of history or historiography. Explaining the innovations in motifs and narrative strategies of the Slovene historical novel will be based on a short theoretical introduction, which takes into account the agent of post-structuralist metahistory, of political history, J. M. Lotman's concept of the semiosphere and its accommodation to the ideological-critical perspective on the genre of the historical novel.

Key words historical novel; semiosphere; ideology; historiography; Drago Jancar

Many single cultural communities of the territories of Central, Eastern and Southeastern Europe, including the Slovene cultural community,[1] have constructed their cultural identities since the 19th century by the integrative ideological agent of nationalism(s). Nationalisms also invented the past(s) of these communities as the foundations of their contemporaneity. This invention of tradition was intensely at work in the intertextual field of relations between the single national literature and national historiography, i. e. , between fictional and scientific (historiographical) writing the past in the semiosphere of a single cultural community, identified by itself as a nation. During the 20th century, nationalism(s) which arose and developed themselves in the territories of Central, Eastern and Southeastern Europe, experienced very serious rivalry from universalistic political ideology of different kinds, i. e. , either from totalitarian political ideology (for example Communism, Fascism and Nazism) or from authoritarian political ideology (for example the ideology of political Catholicism)[2]. In

these political-historical conditions, a complex relationship developed between nationalist and universalistic political ideologies: this complex relationship includes the relation of appropriation (or consolidation) as well as the relation of opposition in a set of possible concrete intertwinings. The historic imagination which was generated by these ideological intertwinings was also represented and at the same time created by the genre of the historical novel and its intertextual relations with scientific historiography.

The Agent of Post-Structuralist Thought in Contemporary Historical Imagination

The post-structuralist *episteme* articulates the contemporary imagination of the past by recognizing the multi-dimensional and complex character of the past. From the post-structuralist perspective, the great narration of the past written by non-fictional, i. e., scientific traditional historiography, is the construction of the past, which is formed by the narrator's focalization and ideological perspective. From the 1970s onwards, metahistory has argued the representational affinity between scientific historiography and (narrative) fiction, which is based on the common patterns of narration, as well as on a clear recognition of the myth-creating capacity of the historical imagination. "Histories gain their explanatory power by processing data into stories. Those stories take their shape from what White [Hayden White] calls 'emplotment', the process through which the facts contained in 'chronicles' are encoded as components of plots. ... No historical event can itself constitute a story, tragic or ironic: it can only be presented as such from a particular historian's narrative point of view. The event emerges as a plotted story, which takes on meaning when it is combined with other elements in the limited number of generic plot structures by which a series of events can be constituted. ... These generic deep-plot structures are shared between historians and their audiences by virtue of their participation in a common culture." (Leitch 1710) Based on this re-questioning of the capacities of historiography, meta-history has been able to include the theory of representation[3]: "the main principle of the aesthetic turn is that history as a narrative representation can only be compared with other narrative representations, and not with the past itself" (Munslow 22).

Another way of reading the past can be based on the concept of the semiosphere. The term semiosphere was invented by Yuri M. Lotman, who has passed as the central representative of the Tartu school of semiotics (Estonia).

Lotman's Concept of the Semiosphere and Semiosis of the Past

In Lotman's opinion, every living culture is organized in the form of a certain space and time: it can't exist outside this organisation, i. e., the semiosphere, which enables communication within a certain culture. The semiosphere is also "the semiotic space necessary for the existence and functioning of languages, not the sum total of different languages; in a sense the semiosphere has a prior existence and is in constant interaction with languages ... a generator of information" (Lotman 123, 127). However, the semiosphere is not a totally uniform (cultural) space: a mechanism of

multiplication of its languages is built into every living culture. This mechanism is at work also in the opposite direction, i. e., in the direction of unifying the languages.

> The interrelationship between cultural memory and its self-reflection is like a constant dialogue: texts from chronologically earlier periods are brought into culture, and, interactive with contemporary mechanisms, generate an image of the historical past, which culture transfers into the past and which like an equal partner in a dialogue, affects the present. (Lotman 272)

Operating in this sense, the semiosphere creates (and at the same time is also created by) the diachronic change of imagination and representation of the past. However, these imaginations and representations differ among themselves in the synchronic aspect, too, while there is a plurality of different languages at work inside the very moment or situation of the semiosphere. In the synchronic aspect, the representations of the past which appear on the borders of the semiosphere differ from those representations which form (and which at the same time are generated predominantly by) the centre of a certain semiosphere. The dynamic relation between the centre, which tends to unify semiospheric languages, i. e., to generate temporarily predominant historiographical conventions, and the borders of the semiosphere can be read in the language of scientific historiography, as well as in the language of historiographical fiction, i. e., in their intertextual relations.

The Semiosphere, Nationalism(s) and the Historical Novel

Unlike scientific (historiographical) language, which tends to semantic monovalency, the explicitly fictional character of literature and (historiographical) fiction's tendency to semantic polivalency enables a more complex, i. e., less (methodologically or even ideologically) reductive representation of the past. "Myths, speculations, guesses, and seemingly illogical connections, which 'have no right to exist' in [scientific] historiography, enable the literarization of history. On the one hand, this produces great surpluses in the understanding of complex historical developments (e. g., addressing moral and political dilemmas that literary characters can resolve, while historical facts can neither confirm nor deny them). On the other hand, this allows literature to suffer great shortcomings" (Pelikan 168). However, in many single cultural communities of Central, Eastern and Southeastern Europe which maintained themselves in the conditions of political non-emancipation, literature (identified as national literature) contracted the pragmatic (non-fictional) function of arguing the foundations of political emancipation of the cultural community (the so-called cultural syndrome).

By taking over this function, literature was used (or tended to operate) as an indispensable agent in state-formative, integrative constructing of the common past. In the domain of historiographical fiction, a privileged position was bestowed on the genre of the historical novel, which enables representing the past in the form of the great story of a single cultural community. In this sense, the historical novel should aim even to fulfil the demands of the type of the novel-epopee as an attempt to regain

the lost "totality" of a (mythical) community of the epic period.[4] In such cultural-political conditions, the historical novel, otherwise read as an explicitly fictional great story of the past and despite the principal dialogic complexity of its semiosphere languages, paradoxically tended to be read as a representation of the unique truth of the past, i. e., history, using narrative strategies which are characteristic of the textual unifying of different voices of the past, such as the authorial narrator's position.

In the tradition of the Slovene historical novel, such a narrative strategy is at work in the fairly typical case of Fran Saleški Finžgar's novel *Pod svobodnim soncem* (*Under the Liberated Sun*) (1912). Finžgar's novel represents the period of migration of peoples, i. e., the combats between the Byzantine empire's army and, among others, different Slavic tribes, which resulted in the permanent settlement of Slavic tribes in the territories of Southeastern Europe. In the novel, these combats were considered as the beginning of the imagined Slovene history, based on the protagonist's affiliation to his tribe in the sense of the future national community. However, as in Sinkiewics´novels, the religious (in this case, Christian) agent co-operates with the agent of national ideology. Henryk Sienkiewicz's trilogy of the novels (1883, 1886, 1902), which refers to the Polish history of the 17th century, intensely suggest the opinion of the inseparable religious and national (in this case, Catholic and Polish national) character of the cultural community.

The authorial narrator's position in the historical novel creates more or less obvious intertextual relations between this (traditional) variant of the historical novel and scientific historiography, i. e., its pragmatic integrative function in the cultural space, which constructed its identity by the national ideology. This process of unifying the languages of historiographical fiction and scientific historiography was gradually generated by the centre of the semiosphere of the Slovene cultural space in the last decades before the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy (1918), to which the Slovene cultural community belonged in the state-political sense.

Centre, Borders and Ideological Unifications of the Past

Relations between the centre and borders which dynamically maintain the inner organisation of the semiosphere seem to be of special importance for those cultural spaces which, before their re-organisation to suit the post-modern present time, were explicitly engaged in self-organizing by the (modern) progressivist conceptualization of time. In the semiospheres of smaller cultural communities located in Central, Eastern and Southeastern Europe, among which the Slovene cultural community also appeared, the dominant ideology (dominant in the very temporal sense of being the most permanently integrative for the community) seems to be national ideology, accommodated to the teleological concept of history. This accommodation was represented by Bogo Grafenauer's *Zgodovina slovenskega naroda* (*History of the Slovene Nation*) (1954 – 1974) in five volumes. It served as a widely acknowledged and highly valued Slovene scientific historiographical reference.

However, the universalistic political ideologies of different kinds, like the ideology of political Catholicism, Communism, Fascism, and Nazism has gradually moved

to the centre of these semiospheres, especially since about the second quarter of the 20th century. These universalistic political ideologies strove to accommodate national ideology, i. e. the different nationalisms of these semiospheres. In this accommodating process, a double relation developed between single national and universalistic political ideologies, also the relation of opposition, as well as the relation of appropriation (consolidation) in a plurality of varieties. This process was generated by the centre of the gradually re-organized semiosphere, which in this period tended to unify the different languages of the semiosphere in the sense of ideological accommodation.

The historical novel, written in Slovene and referring to the past of the Slovene cultural community, does not reveal a very explicit tendency to distribute this or that universalistic political ideology. Generally (but not exclusively) it tends slightly to the political left. Such fictional representations of history can be read also in the more general aspect of the literary current of renovated (social) realism and naturalism of the second quarter of the 20th century.

Political History as the Agent of Historical Representation in the Slovene Cultural Space after 1941

The Slovene cultural community, which also identified itself as the Slovene national community during the course of the 19th century, was politically located in another multi-national state (the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia) after World War II. Within this state, the national ideology partly consolidated and partly opposed the universalistic political ideology of this multi-national state, i. e., the socialistic concretization of communism.

In terms of appropriation (consolidation), the significant (cultural-) historical fact can be found already during World War II on Slovene territory (1941 – 1945): the military troups of the partisan movement which in Slovenia revolted against the Nazi and Fascist occupation and at the same time acted for the communist revolution, were often named after those Slovene poets and writers who wrote literature of special national importance or of value for the Slovene cultural community. Giving the partisan military troups the names borrowed from the Slovene literary history gave mytho-creative cultural-historical legitimacy to the so-called national liberation combat and revolution in the nationally self-identified community.

With regard to opposition, a significant (cultural-) historical fact can also be found during World War II in Slovenia: some members of the Slovene community did not support the communist revolution. This revolt, mostly associated with religious reasons, led to collaboration with Nazi and Fascist institutions in Slovenia, together with their military troups, and to civil war. After World War II, Slovene political emigrants formed Slovene cultural communities in non-Slovene territories, particularly in Argentina: these small communities maintained the national identity of the emigrants by their own national-cultural activities (e. g. systematically publishing the classics and contemporary authors of Slovene literature and texts of a historiographical character). Such a mytho-creative use of national literature and the national past gave a cultural-historical legitimacy to the political emigrants' communities, too, almost in

the same way as to the participants of the communist revolution in Slovenia.

Within the socialist multi-national state, constituted after World War II, the dominant political ideology was to be the universalistic, i. e. , communist ideology, (in the Slovene case) based on the relation of appropriation or consolidation with national ideology, asoutlined above. This (more or less) dominant relation of consolidation was generated by the centre of the semiosphere. However, the scientific historiography of this period seems to be a more unified language than the historical novel of the highest artistic value. The Slovene novel after the 1970s, for example Vitomil Zupan's modern novel *Menuet za kitaro*: *na* 25 *strelov* (*Minuet for* 25-*shot Guitar*) (1975) more explicitly articulates doubts about the communist regime of the partisan movement and the post-war situation, written by the strategy of the first-person's personal narrator's position. More precisely, it articulates or represents a doubt (just) as to the true worth of the progressive (communist) universalistic political ideology which through its institutions and practices creates a regime of power, annihilating the value of a single individuum and his/her (sometimes lethal) experience of the past.

However, the more traditionally conceptualized (realistic) historical novel, characterized by the narrative strategy of the authorial narrator's position, maintained its general intertextual relation with traditional scientific historiography. This intertextual relation is clearly manifested by Tone Svetina's historical novel *Ukana* (*Stratagem*) (1965 – 1969) in three volumes. Svetina's novel was especially appreciated by the political regime, while it forms the past of the partisan movement on Slovene territory (1941 – 1945) to the great (hi)story of the Slovene cultural community (politically integrated into the multi-national state of Yugoslavia) from the ideological point of view, which was in this case the communist one. As a proof of the high value which was ascribed to this novel by the regime, the novel was re-made in the medium of a large picture book (1977), so that it could distribute its representation of the war past among the largest audience, forming its historical imagination in the imagined proper way.

Actual multiplication of the concepts of history in the Slovene semiosphere can be read no earlier than about the 1990s. [5] In the present-day Slovene cultural space, this multiplication of the intertextual relationship between fictional and scientific historiography is created by (and at the same time creates by itself) the agent of political history and the agent of the post-structuralist historical turn. Both of these agents motivate (and are motivated by) the re-questioning of former fictional and scientific representations of the past as history, as well as the capacities of historiography in accessing the (empirically inaccessible) past. One of the most significant signs of this general re-organization of the Slovene semiosphere after the 1990s seems to be the very multiplication of the concepts of history, which (paradoxically) articulates and creates the democratic policy of ideological pluralism as the contemporary unifying process of the semiospheric languages, which is generated by the centre of the semiosphere.

This multiplication appears in the scientific historiography written in Slovene, which has been divided into different sub-disciplines, such as oral history, micro-history, cultural history, mytho-critical history, etc. , as well as into different ideolog-

ical points of view as the starting points for interpreting the past. However, this multi-plication of the concepts of history, i. e., the multiplication of historical representations appears as significant changes in the intertextual domain of the genre of the historical novel, after the 1990s written in Slovene and referring to the past of the Slovene cultural community. Even if not in a radical way, i. e., as explicit historiographical metafiction, the contemporary (Slovene) historical novel articulates the post-structural re-questioning of history and at the same time multiplies the representations of the past by articulating either different concepts of history or, in a special case, the past in its stressfully unrestrained dialogical complexity.

What kinds of inventions can be read in the genre of the historical novel, co-operating in the process of pluralisation, i. e., multiplication of the concepts of history and representations of the past?

The Slovene Historical Novel after 1990: Inventions of Motifs in Revisions of Slovene History

The first set of inventions includes inventions or re-using of motifs which thematize the materials of the past, which were ignored or ideologically oppressed in the previous process of intertextual unification of scientific and fictional historiography, nor were they considered a proper subject for motivating the historical imagination. The historical imagination should be principally led by the relation of appropriation (or consolidation) between the universalistic (communist) political ideology and national ideology. The new or re-used motifs can be read as signs of the new semiosis of the past. In this innovationor re-using of motifs, the past has been presented in different narrative strategies, which above all refer to the degree of the narrator's mastery over the past, i. e., to the degree of the narrator's capacity for interpreting the past in order to articulate the truth of it.

The first narrative strategy follows the pattern of traditional scientific historiography and (social-realistic) fictional historiography, re-using the authorial narrator's position. The invention refers to the expanded, more complex past of the cultural community which is now subjected to historical revision from the predominant perspective of ideological pluralism. Especially the period 1900 – 1940/45 is the focus of historical revision, while in this period different universalistic political ideologies (particularly the ideology of political Catholicism and communist ideology), moving in the centre of the semiosphere, tried to accommodate the national ideology of the cultural community. In this revisionist historiographical focus, the past of this period also appears as, in some way, real or actual foundations of the ideological pluralism of the period after the 1990s. Between 1945 and about 1970, this complex past was also represented either by way of a more or less reductive selection of motifs or in a negative evaluation, i. e., thematizations of such motifs as the Catholic priest, Nazi officer, wealthy peasant or countryman, rich industrialist, etc. All of these social roles could be developed to the function of negative icons, i. e., representations of the anti-communist stand, annihilated by intertextually unified scientific and fictional historiography. All of the social types in this function appear in Tone Svetina's parti-

san historical novel mentioned above, which by the intensive presence of the implied author and by narrating from the authorial narrator's position forms the emplotment of past events from the ideological perspective to the common truth of the past of this period. The same pattern of the authorial narrator's position or the indisputable capacity for recognizing the truth of the past appears after 1990, namely in Miloš Mikeln's novel *Veliki voz* (*The Great Bear*) (1992), with the significant distinction of a different ideological perspective in presenting the social structure of the Slovene community in the period about 1900 – 1940 to the largest extent. In this novel, the individuals which represent the above-mentioned social types are not developed to the function of negative icons of the past; on the contrary, they represent a dialogical plurality of voices, i. e., ideological stands and more complex world views in order to represent the complexity of the so called foundational past period of the Slovene cultural community. However, this dialogical plurality and its result of complexity of the past in another way articulates (and co-operates in the process of) unifying the historiographical languages generated by the centre of the semiosphere, which principally privileges the resisting national ideology, accommodated to the plural co-existence of different universalistic political ideologies and world views. The contemporary historical novel, using the narrative strategy of the authorial narrator's position, can also form the great narration as the history of the nation. The contemporary Slovene historical novel can also maintain the contiguity and coherence of past events, categorizing the Slovene cultural space as to the examined temporal vertical, by which it maintains the intertextual relation to traditional historiography, its preoccupation with political history and its formation of the great story of (Slovene) history. This kind of multiplication of representations of history, maintaining the privileged position of the national ideology, also gained the national annual prize for the novel.

Mikeln's novel *Poročnik z Vipote* (*The Lieutenant from Vipota*) (2002) further develops the representation of national history, emplotting the past situation of World War II on Slovene territory. However, the continuity of the national history, based on causality, is now projected onto the individual life course of a single protagonist, who from one political-ideological orientation (of a Home Guard lieutenant) passes over to another (a partisan soldier). His final role is that of a British agent.

The second narrative strategy, re-used in the course of historical revision and as one aspect of multiplications of representing history, is the third-person variant of the personal narrator's position. This narrative strategy, used in Alojz Rebula's historical novel *Nokturno za Primorsko* (*Nocturnal for the Littoral*) (2004), for example, explicitly represents the oppressed materials of the past of the national community during the period about 1900 – 1945. These materials refer to the anti-communist ideological position of the Catholic clergy, which in the civil war period (about 1941 – 1945) often resulted in murders of the priests. These oppressed materials of the past are also thematized as newly invented or re-used motifs. The priest as protagonist of this anti-communist, in this case religious stand, is positively evaluated by the implied author which is invisibly at work. The technique of the stream of consciousness, formed by the third person variant of the personal narrator's position, intensifies the direct representation of the priest's experience of the civil war and strengthens the

reader's empathy towards the victim of (the communist) revolution. This revision, or political-ideological revaluation of history accommodates the national ideology to the universalist religious world view, in some way following the practice of the ideology of political Catholicism. Representing just one ideological stand of the historical period being discussed certainly does not articulate the ideologically pluralistic policy, generated by the centre of the semiosphere. However, the historical representation of Rebula's novel co-operates in creating this plurality as one voice of it, i.e., in the role of possessing knowledge of one part of the truth of the past. This historical novel obviously maintains the intertextual relation to contemporary Slovene scientific historiography. The novel was also awarded the national prize for the novel.

The third narrative strategy for articulating an (in this case more slight) invention or re-using the motifs can be identified as the third person personal narrator's position, referring to the author's life. However, these novels do not form the genre of autobiography, which co-operated in the process of multiplying representations of the past since the period of Modernism (which in Slovene literature reached its peak during the 1960s and the 1970s). The protagonists of these novels do not represent any exposed social role of the so-called public past; on the contrary, they represent just the very individual, i.e., their own life course. This life course is of course intertwined with the agent of the political-historical changes. The narration also intertwines the subjectively important signs of the so-called private past (in the function of leitmotifs, or symbols) with the signs of the public past. In this strategy, the past presents itself in its open complexity, i.e., not being able to reach its final interpretation, or truth. It also cannot be reduced to any ideological representation of the past, especially not in the form of great narrative. This narrative strategy was used, for example, in Nedeljka Pirjevec's novel *Saga o kovčku* (*The Story of the Suitcase*) (2003) and Jože Snoj's *Gospod Pepi* (*Mister Pepi*) (2000). This narrative strategy of representing the past reveals its intertextual relationship with contemporary scientific historiography's sub-discipline, namely micro-history. In this aspect, it co-operates in the contemporary multiplication of the concepts of history.

The Slovene Historical Novel after 1990: Inventions of Forming the Past

One of the most significant inventions for forming the past in the course of revising Slovene history appears already in 1984. This invention includes representing the past partly from an explicit futurological point of view; however, this futurology enables knowledge about the history of the present time and in this aspect is the fictional one, i.e., the falsification of futurology. It is developed by explicitly multiplying the narrator's position, which alternates the third person personal narrator's position with the first person personal narrator's position, as well as with the authorial narration which is powerlessly directed to the future, i.e., generalized results of the represented historical situation, viewed by the knowledge of the present times. This technique was significantly used by the German writer Alfred Döblin in his novel *Berlin Alexanderplatz* (1929). In this narrator's position, the grammatical past and present tense of the narration changes to the future tense. This narrative strategy, by using which the past gets its judgement or generalized truth, appears in Drago Jančar's historical novel

Northern Lights (1984). "Shortly after that the facades of the buildins will sport the name of the victorious Red Army, and just when the street activists will have gotten people used to the new name, the Red Army will drop to the pavement, too, and from then on this will be Revolution Square. ... A short while later, as hammers drive nails into the tobacconist's coffin, his place in the shop will be taken by a comrade who would never even think of comparing this piece of the world, which she stares at in boredom for most of the day, to a hart, and the streets to arteries. " (Jančar 72) This judgement can be simply summarized by the word catastrophe, which certainly could not be used in the former historiographical interpretations of the Slovene past about 1939, guided by progressive universalistic political ideology. Jančar's novel does not explicitly maintain the intertextual relation with contemporary Slovene scientific historiography. In a more general way it co-operates in the revision of Slovene history, produced in different ways by scientific and fictional historiography in the contemporary period of multiplying conceptualizations of the (Slovene) past. However, Jančar's novel also maintains the intertextual relation with historio-critical fiction, namely by quotation-like fragments, referring to Döblin's novel.

Two significant Slovene novelistic re-formings, or multiplications of the concepts of history through their whole texts draw attention directly to the post-structuralist re-questioning of historiography, including the modern conceptualization of irreversible and progressive time, as well as the absolute legacy of the great (hi)stories, constructed by traditional historiographies.

The first kind of invention in historical imagination and historiographical representation in the context of the Slovene historical novel uses the montage technique: the text of Rudi Šeligo's novel Izgubljeni sveženj (The Lost Bundle) (2002), awarded a national prize, creates the effect of discontinuity by setting the indefinite crossings of the protagonist through time and space, dispersed to approximately recognizable times (from about 2000 back to about the 1930s) and territories, ie. , more or less well-known historical or trans-historical situations. This dispersion of chronotope creates incessant metamorphoses of the protagonist, who appears in the roles of a contemporary businessman, a participant in the Spanish civil war, a professional revolutionary, a partisan soldier, the shepherd and probably also as a variant of the biblical figure of doubting Thomas. In this way, the (Slovene) past presents itself as an uncaptured complexity of meanings which cannot be fixed in any final signifiant. The protagonist's vague identity through the set of metamorphoses is maintained just in the vague feeling of his ethical determination, namely that he (in his opinion) carries the tradition across the thresholds of history. Rudi Šeligo's novel therefore articulates the post-structuralist doubt concerning history and at the same time relativizes the former Slovene representations of (Slovene) history. In doing this, it creates one of the most obvious representations of the multiplication of the concepts of history.

The second kind of invention in historiographical representation in the context of the Slovene historical novel is created by the allegorical textual strategy of narration which, reminding one of mytho-criticism, confronts two types of myth in order to reveal the myth as the base of historical imagination. This mytho-critical form of invention appears in Drago Jančar's novel *Graditelj* (*The Constructor*) (2006). The narra-

tion also confronts the pre-modern, i. e., classical myth of Daedalus (the constructor of the mythical labyrinth) and the modern political-ideological type of myth which is revealed as a representation of modern nihilism. The modern myth as the historical foundation of a single progressive political ideology is of course based on the modern concept of time. Because of this (modern) temporality, the modern myth annihilates its very essence. [6] In Jančar's novel, the classical myth serves to annihilate the modern communist myth. The common reference of both myths is the labyrinth, or the prison in the sense of Michel Foucault's ideological-critical interpretation of Jeremy Bentham's *panopticon* as the space of total surveillance. Both of the narrators, of whom one acts as the protagonist, too, interpret the practice of progressive political ideology by using the classical myth's motifs. The narration also systematically reveals the modern regime's construction of history as a myth; moreover, as a myth of temporary value. This mytho-critical tendency of the novel intertextually refers to contemporary scientific historiography's sub-discipline, i. e., mytho-criticism, as well as to one course of contemporary Slovene historiography.

To conclude: Slovene historical novels, discussed in this article, also represent fictional historiography in its intertextual relationship with scientific historiography. This historiographic intertextuality creates and is at the same time created by the centre of the semiosphere of the Slovene cultural space between about 1900 and 2000. The centre of the semiosphere generated this process of unifying the different (historiographical) languages of the semiosphere in the wider range of accommodating the national ideology to the two different universalistic political ideologies, i. e., the ideology of political Catholicism and later Communism. The semiosphere of the contemporary Slovene cultural space has been re-organized by the agent of post-structuralist thought, as well as by the agent of the political-historical changes about the 1990s. This change is articulated by the multiplication of the concepts of history in the contemporary Slovene historical novel. It is of course generated by the centre of the semiosphere of the contemporary Slovene cultural space which in this aspect paradoxically unifies different languages of the semiosphere, representing them as articulations of contemporary (Slovene) ideological pluralism.

Notes

1. This essay will use the denotation "Slovene cultural community" mostly by taking into account the fact of the common natural language, named the Slovene language, which was of extreme importance for maintaining the integrity of the community during the political-historical changes in European territories.

2. The distinction between totalitarian and authoritarian political ideologies is based on the arguments of S. G. Payne and of E. Hanisch. See Stanley G. Payne. "The Concept of Fascism." *Who were theFascists: Social Roots of European Fascism.* eds. S. Larsen, et al. Oslo, Bergen(Tromso: Universitetsforlaget, 1980) 14 – 25. See also Ernst Hanisch, Die Ideologie des Politischen Catholicismus in Österreich 1918 – 1938. Wien, Salzburg: Geyer, 1977.

3. See Frank R. Ankersmit. *Historical Representation.* Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001.

4. In Lukács' opinion, "[t]he artist's epic intention, his desire to arrive at a world beyond the problematic, is aimed only at an immanently Utopian ideal of social forms and structures; therefore

it does not transcend these forms and structures generally but only their historically given concrete possibilities — and this is enough to destroy the immanence of form." See Georg Lukács, *The Theory of the novel.* Trans. Anna Bostock (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1974)144.

5. This approximate date refers to the political-historical processes that include *perestroika* and the collapse of the Soviet Union, the fall of the Berlin Wall, the state-political emancipation of the (North) East-European national communities (for example, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia) and the Central-European national communities (for example, the Czech Republic, Slovakia); either in the form of peaceful constitutions of single states or through military combats, as in Slovenia (in its 10-day war) and in former Yugoslavia with its longlasting wars in (for example) Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina.

6. See Vanesa Matajc. "Communist Revolution and Daedalus´Labyrinth: Confronting Two Concepts of Time, Confronting Two Types of Myth." *Interlitteraria* 13 (2008): 56 – 72.

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